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HOUSE MEMORIAL 53

49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009

INTRODUCED BY

Anna M. Crook

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE PUBLIC EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AND THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CONVENE A WORK GROUP TO STUDY AND DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING PREVENTION OF TEEN DATING VIOLENCE IN NEW MEXICO.

WHEREAS, dating violence among teens and young adults has become an increasingly visible problem in our society; and

WHEREAS, teen dating violence cuts across race, gender and socioeconomic lines, affecting both males and females, although females are injured more severely and more frequently; and

WHEREAS, teen dating violence includes a spectrum of abusive behaviors, including isolation, anger, emotional abuse, domination and control, intimidation, threats and sexual coercion as well as overt violence; and

WHEREAS, teens in violent relationships are at risk of

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1 being killed by their abusive partners and are eight to nine
2 percent more likely to attempt suicide; and

3 WHEREAS, teen dating violence is linked to poor school
4 attendance and poor academic achievement; and

5 WHEREAS, teens in violent dating relationships are more
6 likely to abuse drugs and alcohol; and

7 WHEREAS, teen dating violence may result in depression,
8 anxiety and eating disorders; and

9 WHEREAS, teens who are experiencing dating violence are at
10 risk for sexually transmitted diseases and teen pregnancy; and

11 WHEREAS, a national survey shows that nearly twenty-five
12 percent of surveyed youth fourteen to seventeen years old
13 report knowing at least one student victim of dating violence,
14 and thirty-three percent of these young people report having
15 witnessed such an event; and

16 WHEREAS, in a guide to safe and healthy relationships that
17 was developed by New Mexico teens, titled *Love and Respect*,
18 teens state that dating violence is a major issue in New
19 Mexico; and

20 WHEREAS, according to a 2007 youth and resiliency survey,
21 one in nine high school students in the state report being hit
22 by their boyfriends or girlfriends within the past year, which
23 exceeds the national average; and

24 WHEREAS, New Mexico standards for excellence for health
25 education in grades five through twelve contain a strong

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1 emphasis on helping young people to develop the skills and
2 knowledge to recognize both healthy and unhealthy behaviors in
3 personal relationships and to make healthy choices in the face
4 of risks, threats and dangers; and

5 WHEREAS, many state agencies, organizations and advocates
6 are taking action in numerous venues to raise the awareness of
7 teens, parents and the public about teen dating violence; and

8 WHEREAS, a wealth of resources has been developed to help
9 teens make healthy choices and stay safe in relationships,
10 including web sites, teen-developed videos, media campaigns,
11 school curricula and classroom materials;

12 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF
13 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the public
14 education department and the department of health be requested
15 to convene a work group to study and develop recommendations
16 regarding prevention of teen dating violence in New Mexico; and

17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group include
18 representation from the children's cabinet, the New Mexico
19 youth alliance, the New Mexico forum for youth in community,
20 the New Mexico commission on the status of women, the children,
21 youth and families department, community youth organizations,
22 public school districts, school health educators and
23 counselors, school-based health clinics and other appropriate
24 organizations and individuals; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group utilize

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1 electronic meeting venues, where possible; and

2 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the recommendations of the
3 work group include strategies for educating parents, raising
4 public awareness and utilizing and integrating existing
5 resources as much as possible; and

6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the work group present a
7 written report of its findings and recommendations to the
8 governor, the lieutenant governor and the legislative education
9 study committee by October 1, 2009; and

10 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
11 transmitted to the secretary of public education, the secretary
12 of health and the director of the legislative education study
13 committee.

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